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CHAPTER III

INTRODUCTION TO NUPE KINSHIP

BEFORE attempting the analysis of the Nupe community we must examine certain essential aspects of the kinship system of the country. This description cannot claim to be more than a brief outline. It is concerned only with the main principles of kinship structure among the Nupe so far as they bear on the subject-matter of this book.

The basic structure of the Nupe kinship system is the *extended family*: all individuals who can trace their descent to a certain initial, nucleus family—a husband and his wives—regard themselves as related and as forming one kindred. The Nupe have only one word for kinship, *dengi*, which defines relationship in the widest as well as in a more restricted sense. The vagueness of the terminology reflects the inherent vagueness of this concept of relationship. The extended family is a fluid unit in two respects. First, as the women of the family marry outside, into other houses and families, their connexion with the family from which they come, although never admitted to have ceased entirely, becomes weaker and less effective generation after generation. Secondly, the constant growth and expansion of the kinship unit which this principle of reckoning descent entails leaves the boundaries and 'fringes' of the family unit only vaguely defined. People cannot, in fact, trace their descent back farther than two or three generations, and in every family there are a certain number of 'relatives' who are known to be *dengi*, related, without anyone being able to define the degree or nature of the relationship. Moreover, individuals and sections may split off from the main family group, move to other parts, and thus disappear from the view of the rest of the kinship group.

It is implied in these facts that the effective kinship unit is represented, not in the vaguely defined 'theoretical' extended family, but in that section of it which remains living close together—whose members keep, as it were, in each other's view—in the particular case, the kinship section inhabiting one house. This kinship section is, in fact, referred to as a 'house'—*eni* in Nupe. The Nupe reckon relationship in 'houses', saying, for example, that people belong or do not belong to the same 'house', that is, are or are not related. Technically, the 'house' is a compound of a number of houses (to be described later in more detail), which is enclosed by a common wall and possesses a common gateway or entrance hut, called *katamba*. The term *katamba* is frequently used synonymously with 'house': in enumerating the kinship groups of a village the Nupe will tell you that the village numbers so many *katamba*.

To some extent the house-group, too, is subject to the natural fluctuations of increasing or decreasing population. An overflowing population may necessitate the building of new houses and compounds, mostly placed close to the original home, but in some cases at some distance from it, in another part of the village, perhaps in another locality

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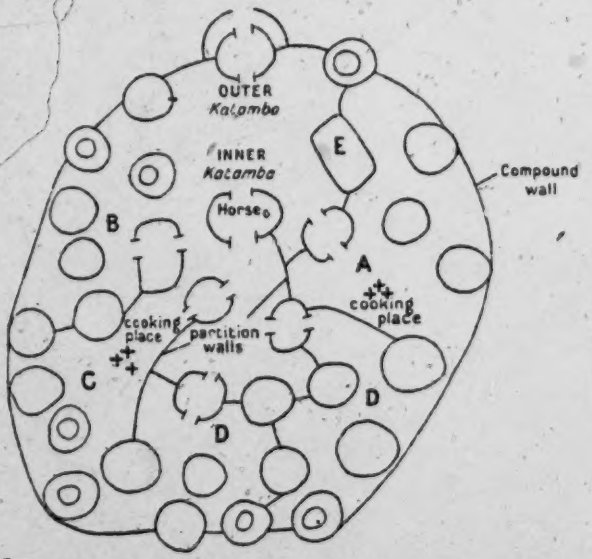
592 596 altogether. Thus one 'house' (in the abstract sense) may be found distributed over a number of adjacent compounds, occupying a part or the whole of the separate cluster of compounds which constitutes the subdivision of the Nupe village, and is called *efu*—a term best translated with 'village ward'. Or we may find separate small hamlets, called *tunga*, which are regarded as dependencies of the original house and village.

HOUSE OF A VILLAGE CHIEF

[372]



○ Sleeping huts (□) Katamba A... partition of family head. B...partition of unmarried sons. C...partition of unmarried daughters. D...partition of married sons and younger brothers. E... sleeping hut of family head. ◎ Granaries.

[621] Both terms, *efu* and *tunga*, will play a considerable part in our discussions of the Nupe community. The fluid transition between 'house' and 'ward' is reflected in the often synonymous use of the two terms: thus the quarter of the blacksmiths (*tswata*) in a certain village will be known both as *emi* and *efu tswata*, or the part of the village in which the chief (*Žitsu*) resides both as *emi* and *efu Žitsu*. Decrease in the size of the kinship group (owing to death or emigration), on the other hand, may cause the break-up of the house-group and lead the people to abandon their home altogether. Individuals who are left without a large family may join friends or neighbours as adopted members of their house.

592 596 369 In Bida the situation is altered by a number of circumstances peculiar to the urban society. Space for local expansion being limited, families are much more widely scattered than in the village, even beyond the

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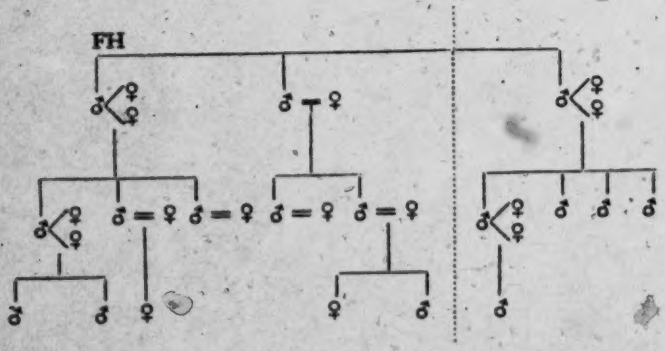
single *efu*, and the family section inhabiting one house is reduced to the smallest size. Moreover, independent economic position and independent, possibly even divergent, political interests and connexions cause adult family members to leave the paternal home and to set up households of their own. Even the wider local unit, the *efu*, is no longer based on kinship, but is largely replaced by a local unit the composition of which is determined by the factor of political allegiance and partisanship.

The size of the house-group varies widely: the largest group which I encountered numbered about sixty individuals, including men and women, adults and children. The smallest groups are found in Bida, and may comprise not more than six or eight people.

The effective kinship unit—the 'house' in the abstract sense of the word—expresses itself conspicuously in the recognition of a common family head, who is called, significantly, *emitsó*, Owner of the House. We shall learn later of the political, religious, and economic prerogatives vested in the person of the family head. Here I will only add that where a section of the house-group splits off from the main body and establishes itself in a new, separate, house it cannot claim to be at once recognized as a new unit, entitled to a separate *emitsó*, but continues to acknowledge the old family head. In the course of time the head of the new group may gain the position of an independent *emitsó*. The following diagram illustrates a case of this kind. The members of the family group placed to the right of the dotted line separated from the main family body in 1934 and moved to a newly built house in another part of the village (Kutigi). The reason given was that the old house had become 'too crowded'. The head of the new group expected to be recognized as *emitsó* after the death of the old family head (marked FH in the diagram).



The 'house' is subdivided into a number of family sections, each of which inhabits a division of the compound. The single section represents an even more effective unit than the house-group and its members enter a more intensive co-operation: they keep house together, eat together, and also form a common productive or labour-unit. No special

[For information on the efakó-group (cooperative labor group), particularly in the craft guilds, also see category 467--Analyst]

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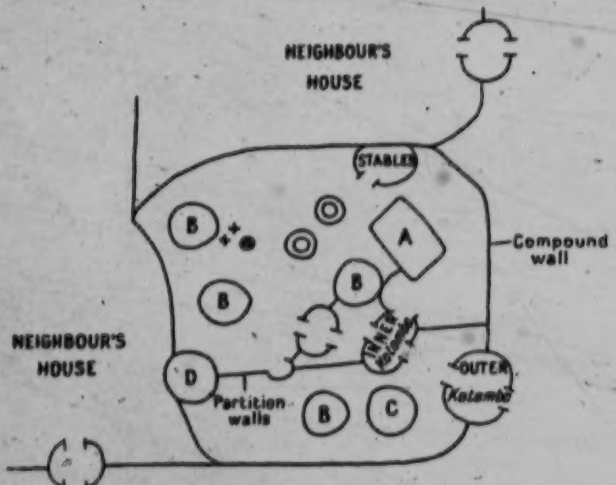
The family has been regarded by many anthropologists as a typical *bilateral* unit—a group in which the transmission of rights and duties follows both the paternal and maternal line. We know now that such family structures are extremely rare, and that in most societies succession in paternal and maternal line supplement each other and are assigned different spheres of validity, certain rights and duties being transmitted in the paternal and others in the maternal line. For the Nupe family we

HOUSE OF A BIDA NOBLEMAN OF LOW RANK



○ Sleeping huts ⊂⊃ Kotamba. A... Sleeping hut of family head.
B... Sleeping huts of his wives. C... Sleeping hut of unmarried son.
D... Sleeping hut of unmarried daughter. ● Well. ◎ Granaries.

can say that rights and duties which are transmitted through the father greatly outweigh in scope and importance those transmitted through the mother. Kinship membership itself and the access to the political and religious rights vested in it are determined by paternal descent. As women in Nupe neither own nor work land, this most important property is also inherited through the father. The rights to certain forms of financial support (e.g. for the payment of bride-price or support in old age) are equally derived from descent in the father's line. As Radcliffe-Brown has shown, the genealogical division into paternal and maternal succession depends also on the nature of the rights and duties that are transmitted from individual to individual, some being transmitted more satisfactorily through men (i.e. the father) and others through women (i.e. the mother).[1] Thus the personal property of the Nupe women is inherited by their daughters—as the personal property

[1] R. A. Radcliffe-Brown, 'Patrilineal and Matrilineal Succession', *Iowa Law Review*, XX, 1935.

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CHAPTER XIII

AGRICULTURE: ORGANIZATION OF LABOUR

LABOUR organization in Nupe, in every field of economic activity, is characterized by a twofold principle: the distinction between individual work and family work or, in native terminology, between *bucá* and *efakó*. As the division of labour implied in this distinction also involves a corresponding division of income and property, our discussion of the organization of agricultural labour must at the same time be a discussion of the forms of property that obtain in relation to agricultural production. The terms *bucá* and *efakó* have, in fact, this wider meaning. Every kind of work done individually, its products and the income—individual income—derived from it, are *bucá*; and every work done jointly, in collective family work, producing output and income over which the family group or a section of the family group exercises joint rights, is *efakó*. Thus we find two different kinds of farm property: *efakó* farms which are owned and worked jointly by the family group, and *bucá* farms worked and owned by individuals. Similarly there are *efakó* granaries to hold the produce from the family farms, and *bucá* granaries to hold the produce which the individual members of the family group own and utilize. The family group or, more precisely, the section of the family group which forms the *efakó*-unit, owns from ten to twelve granaries which are as a rule placed close to the centre of the house. Every *bucá* owner has, besides, his own granary, which is usually found close to the wall of the compound. Obviously, in a system of labour based not on wages but on joint work and a share in the proceeds, the discussion of the labour organization cannot be treated separately from questions of ownership and land-tenure. On the other hand, a co-operative group consisting of a section of the kinship group cannot be described without constant reference to kinship organization. Frequent cross-references, and overlapping with other sections of the book, are thus unavoidable.

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INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY WORK

Let me begin with the *bucá*, which can be briefly described. Every male member of the family owns a *bucá*, with the exception of the family head who being the administrator of the *efakó* has no *bucá* himself. For his personal requirements he is entitled to draw on the *efakó* income. Young boys of 8 or 10 already possess *bucá* farms of their own. *Bucá* farms vary considerably in size, and grow with their occupants. The largest *bucá* farm which I found was about one acre, i.e. about half the size of the plot of land which on the family possessions is proportionate to every adult worker. The average *bucá* yield I found to be between one-third and one-half of the individual adult's share in the yield of the family farm. The *bucá* owner can work on his farm only 'out of business hours', when he is not needed for *efakó*

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work. Two different arrangements exist. The one found more frequently is this: every man works on the *efakó* farm from early morning till 3 or 4 in the afternoon; after that he is free to work his own individual plot. The second, less frequent, arrangement requires married men to work five days in the week, and bachelors six days in the week on the *efakó*, and allows them one or two days—including the weekly day of rest, Friday—on the *bucá*. The selection of crops which are grown on the *bucá* is of necessity very much simpler than that grown on the *efakó*; moreover, no collective work, not even occasional help, is possible for *bucá* work. Thus farmers grow mostly only the staple crops, sorghum, millet, or yam, on their *bucá* farms but sometimes, though rarely, also cotton or ground-nuts. The income from the *bucá* farm is used entirely for personal expenses, for clothes and additional food which are not provided by the family, such as savouries or kola-nuts, beer or palm-wine; for contributions to parties of friends, certain personal gifts, and so forth.

Bucá farm-work is not practised everywhere, and not even in every farming community. *Bucá* work and income of some kind, however, always exists. In certain areas where other forms of production (e.g. certain handicrafts) are practised besides agriculture—mostly forms of production involving less heavy work and higher money-return—these additional productive techniques supply the *bucá* work to which the men turn 'after hours'. Thus we find in Kutigi, the centre of Nupe mat-industry, mat-working adopted as *bucá*; in Mokwa, indigo-dyeing; while on Jebba Island, which is inhabited by the mixed farming and fishing community of the riverain Gbedegi, fishing with the drag-net (carried out in the evenings, i.e. after the day's farm-work) replacing the farming *bucá*.

The joint work on the *efakó* farm is carried out by a section of the household group, i.e. by a section of the family group which lives together in the same 'house' or compound. Only once have I found an *efakó* group comprising individuals who were living in different compounds. It was a transitional arrangement which had occurred in the course of the expansion of one household group, a section of which had split off and was preparing to take new land, farther afield, under cultivation. The 'emigrants' had already built a house in the new locality but were still, for the time being, working with the rest of the original household group on the old land. The whole household group, with its twenty-five to thirty male members, has most probably never formed a single *efakó* group, although informants, here as in so many cases only too ready to idealize the past, will often give exaggerated accounts of the size of the groups that formerly used to work together. Their estimates vary widely, between thirty and a hundred. However, even reliable informants put the size of the *efakó* group in pre-British days at a figure considerably higher than that observed to-day, namely, at from ten to fifteen. The average *efakó* group to-day numbers only two or three adult members. There is no doubt, then, and this is borne out by the evidence of genealogies, that the size of the *efakó* group has been steadily decreasing for some time. These are the figures relating to

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the size of the *efakó* working group in the case of fifty Nupe households which I have analysed (non-adult members of the working group are ignored in the table):

Number of men working together .	1	2	3	4	5	6	Over 6
Number of cases	17	13	11	6	2	1	..[1]

The smallest *efakó* group, of one man, has obviously lost all the essential characteristics which distinguish it from the *bucá* group. In these extreme cases the *bucá* itself disappears, and we have single individual holdings, worked by one man, helped only perhaps by his boys who will stay with him until they are grown up, when they too will demand farms of their own.

The normal *efakó* group consists of a number of close relations—brothers and sons who are either unmarried or only recently married, and have one or two small children—working under the headship of the senior man, a father, father's brother, or eldest brother. Older men who are childless may also remain in the *efakó* group. In larger *efakó* groups and especially in groups the head of which is an old man, the family head may not himself join in the actual farm-work. He supervises it, he makes frequent tours of inspection to the farm, and he lays down the arrangement and order of the work for the day. As a family head he stands more aloof, and is free to use his leisure in his own way. The team-work which the *efakó* implies is of two kinds: actual working together, or co-ordinated working on different plots performing different tasks. Actual working together on the same plot is practised in the tilling of the soil and the preparation of ridges, in transplanting and harvesting. In this team-work a strong stimulus is embodied: the more experienced workers set the pace, and the others follow as well as they can, always conscious of the element of competition and display of efficiency embodied in the joint activity. The leader of the team is not, as we have seen, the head of the *efakó* group himself but the member next in seniority, in the traditional arrangement usually the younger brother or eldest son of the family head. Sowing, ordinary weeding, and the regular tending of the plants may be done by one or two workers of the group only, while the rest may be assigned tasks on other plots or sometimes a different kind of work altogether, such as the task of helping in the house, or taking farm-produce to a distant market.

Whatever the actual division of work, the consciousness of the individual share in the common labour is strongly pronounced, and with it the competitive element in the co-operation. Every co-worker in the team is aware of the number of ridges, for example, which stand to his credit in the common tilling; similarly everyone, at least among the adults, is able to describe precisely his share in the yield produced on the

[1] The proportion of *efakó* groups comprising more than four adults is in reality much smaller than is indicated in the table. A more superficial census of over 160 households, designed specially to ascertain the occurrence of large *efakó* groups, produced the same three instances of households with *efakó*-units of five or six adults.

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common land. The system of individual *bucd* work which runs parallel to the family work no doubt fosters such reckoning; no doubt also that this form of reckoning, essentially competitive as it is, must enhance the energy devoted by the individual worker to the common task. But such an attitude must also foster the tendency to split up and eventually dissolve the working-unit. In a small hamlet near Bida I discovered an interesting form of transition between full co-operation, which yet recognizes the individual share in the common work, and complete dissolution of the working-unit into independent agents. In the case to which I am referring the *efakó* group was divided into two working-units, each being engaged permanently on different fields although the yield produced by the two sections was still collected as the common *efakó* yield. The *efakó* group was formed by a father—a man of over 50—and his two married sons—of about 25 and 30. The father was working one group of plots and the two sons, together, another. The two groups of plots incidentally produced equally large crops, which was due to the fact that the old man could enlist outside labour on his farms and thus equalize the difference in working capacity between himself and his two sons.

MAINTENANCE OF LABOUR

The produce of the *efakó* is handed over *in toto* to the family head. It is stored in the *efakó* granaries, and only the family head has the right to dispose of it. We shall discuss later in detail the various uses to which he may put it. But let me describe here one aspect of the employment of the *efakó* income, namely its use for the benefit of the *efakó* members themselves who helped to produce it, speaking more generally, for the maintenance of the labour organization. The question of maintenance of labour has, first, a strictly material aspect, namely, the supply of the means of production—the agricultural tools. The main agricultural instruments used in Nupe farming, as we have seen, are two kinds of hoe, bush-knife, and axe. They all have to be bought from the blacksmiths or, in the case of the bush-knife, from the European store, and must be repaired periodically—expenses which are by no means negligible. A heavy hoe costs between 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.*, a light hoe between 6*d.* and 1*s.*, axe and bush-knife between 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.*; repairs may amount to between 3*d.* and 4*d.* each time, that is, perhaps 1*s.* a year. Now, as long as the individual worker remains in the *efakó* group, the head of the group supplies new tools and pays for repairs. A man who leaves the *efakó* group to work on his own may take away the tools which he has been using—they have become 'his' tools—but from now on he must himself pay the cost of all repairs or the purchase of new tools.

The second, human, aspect in the problem of maintenance of labour is the maintenance of the workers themselves. They are housed, clothed, and fed by the family head. The head of the *efakó* group is responsible for all expenses that occur in connexion with the repair of the house and the huts in which his co-workers live; he provides their clothing and food—the section of the family group which is regularly

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eating together and constitutes one *ménage* coincides in fact with the *efakó*-unit. The *efakó* head further pays the tax for his co-workers and is also expected to make himself responsible for establishing them socially when they have reached full adulthood, i.e. he will enable them to get married, by paying their bride-price. By allotting to the co-workers from earliest youth an individual plot for *bucd* work or allowing them the time for other *bucd* enterprises, he also puts them in the position of earning an independent income. They use it, as I have said, for their personal wants over and above those catered for by the family head—what we may call the small luxuries of life. When they desire to leave the *efakó* group and set up for themselves the family head finally provides the members of his group with the necessary 'capital' in the form of the tools which they may take with them, food for the first year while their new land does not yet bear crops, and, above all, in form of the parcel of family land which he allots to them as their own property. In order to do all this the family head must be able not only to draw on regular supplies of agricultural produce from the family land but also to avail himself of certain commodities of exchange and that universal medium of exchange, money. He must plan his money expenditure and accumulate reserves which can alone enable him to pay the large bride-price (which is always in money) when the time comes. The resources of the family working-unit thus gain the significance of capital proper, invested in the maintenance of labour; without it, without the prospect of fulfilling all these economic obligations towards the members of the working-unit, the *efakó* group cannot be maintained satisfactorily.

Here we come back to the decline or disintegration of the family working-unit under modern conditions which we have outlined in the beginning of this section. Now, every co-operative group must to some extent reckon with a periodical and temporary disintegration, that is, with the necessity of periodically readjusting its body of workers, replacing those who have died or are too old or who for other reasons desire to leave the group and to admit new, young members in their place. This is done through the twofold mechanism of inheritance and succession, and of release with regard to members who leave the group to work on their own. We shall examine inheritance and succession later; here it will suffice to say that in the Nupe system of inheritance the family farm goes to the relation next in seniority, younger brother or eldest son (in the classificatory sense). As regards the release of members from the group, the rule used to be that junior members remained in the *efakó* until they had more than two wives and more than two or three children. In the last five to ten years, however, many large *efakó* groups were dissolved after the death of the family head, and the family land, instead of being worked jointly by the remaining members of the family under the new head, was divided up among the various individuals who now work independently each on his own land. Moreover, nowadays young men who have just married frequently decline to stay in the *efakó*-unit and demand to be given a separate farm. I have noted many cases of this kind, in all parts of Nupe, in which the dissolution of the *efakó* group occurred between six and ten years ago.

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How are we to explain this comparatively sudden change? Viewing it from the general economic point of view all the advantages seem to be on the side of a large labour-unit: our discussion of the agricultural technique of the country has taught us that a large labour group represents, in Nupe, the only means of cultivating a large variety of both useful and profitable crops. Moreover, a large *efakó*-unit assures a certain measure of leisure to the family head and the old men in general, by enabling them to leave a large proportion of the actual work to the younger generation. It assures also a better distribution of responsibility, counting more adults among its members than does the small working-unit. It utilizes more fully the important incentive of competition and is, finally, of great educational value; for only in large labour-units are the young boys likely to work regularly in the company of others of their own age.

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But if from point of view of group efficiency and security the large working-unit appears superior to the small (say) one- or two-men 'group', it is not necessarily so when looked at from the viewpoint of the individual. Take the question of leisure and distribution of responsibility. In one of the instances in which I found a large *efakó*-unit having been dissolved recently (six years ago), after the death of the family head, I was given this as the reason of the change: the new family head, the eldest of five brothers, had availed himself liberally of the privilege of leisure which his position implied, and frequently went hunting while the others were working on the farm. Now, while they had accepted the same arrangement under the old family head, their father, they declined to accord this privilege to their eldest brother, and preferred to dissolve the whole unit and work each for himself. To-day, working on their own, the individual family members have a comparatively larger measure of freedom and leisure, which they are free to use as they like. They can use their own discretion in planning the farm-work: of the five brothers two have taken to spend their spare time in making mats, a leisure-time occupation which, they assured me, is financially very advantageous to them; one has left the village; and the family head himself can still spend part of his time in hunting. Against the considerations of group efficiency thus stand individual considerations of gain, which provide another, and in some respects very different, standard of appreciation by which to measure the value of the large labour-unit. The word 'gain' should not be understood in too narrow a sense. Freedom of movement, freedom to choose a different profession (we remember, for example, the openings which the political life of the capital offered to young men of adventurous spirit), even freedom to enjoy one's leisure independent of the dictates of family requirements—these spiritual values appear under certain circumstances as tempting to the younger generation as does the prospect of material gain.

The two standards of appreciation will coincide where the *efakó* group is in a position to guarantee the satisfaction of all needs and demands which the group-members might feel. Nupe family co-operation in farm-work, once apparently more satisfactorily adjusted, is now failing in this respect. This failure can be attributed to two different develop-

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ments: to an increase in the needs and demands on the part of the individual members with which the system of family co-operation failed to cope; or to a decline in the efficiency of the group to maintain its former standards of maintenance. The Nupe *efakó* system has, in fact, failed on both accounts. As regards the first, a large variety of new needs and wants, temptations and values have spread, primarily from the town, and have begun to transform the original peasant culture; as regards the second, the family head is to-day frequently unable to meet out of the family income two financial demands which are regarded as essential to the *efakó* concept, the payment of the bride-price and the payment of tax for the individual members of the *efakó* group.

Certain of the influences which have thus led to the decline of the large working-unit are no doubt due to factors of modern culture change. Yet it would be wrong to regard the change in the structure of the working-unit merely as a result of the outside influence of culture contact. The structural change forms part of a much wider phenomenon; it is the result of an intrinsic economic development, namely, the readjustment between productive organization and needs existing in the society. If the change were due exclusively to culture contact we should expect to find the larger working-unit preserved only in backward, 'unsophisticated', districts. This is not the case. The table on p. 243 showed that three households out of fifty had working-units composed of more than four adults. Of these three households only one belongs to a backward area—the household of the chief of Doko. The two other examples come both from one of the most progressive places in Nupe, Lemu, and from a group of farmers who, as mentioned before, have but recently undertaken the cultivation of a new commercial crop, red pepper, to replace another commercial crop, ground-nuts, which had not proved an economic success. A large working group is essential to the cultivation of this new crop. In these two households the young men have remained in the *efakó*, content with their position, while the family head, in turn, is able to provide bride-price and tax-money. Here, then, culture contact so far from being responsible for the dissolution of the large working-unit has on the contrary supplied a type of production which enables the large working-unit to maintain itself; paradoxically, culture contact has placed the *efakó*-unit in a position to satisfy those very demands and needs which culture contact has newly imposed upon the society. However, these instances from Lemu are exceptional: neither in Mokwa, the centre of ground-nut cultivation, nor in Kutigi, where cotton is grown on a comparatively large scale, has the large *efakó* group survived. The exceptional cases which I have discovered are too few to warrant a more far-reaching, systematic explanation. Moreover, whereas in this case attractions and temptations appealing to the younger generation are partly responsible for the social change, individual differences must play a considerable part. We can only tentatively point to a certain negative evidence: the absence of some of these 'temptations' in Lemu which have made the younger generation in Mokwa and Kutigi claim an early economic independence. Lemu is neither a centre of native trade, nor does a profitable alternative

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241 occupation to farm-work (e.g. a handicraft, carried out in one's leisure-
● 592 time) exist there, nor, finally, has its connexion with the political life of the
178 town ever been as strong as in those other places.

COLLECTIVE LABOUR

241 The co-operation of the *efakó* group is more or less regularly supple-
476 mented by a system of mutual assistance and large-scale collective labour among the villagers, an institution which the Nupe have in common with all other Nigerian tribes. Its help is enlisted in all cases in which the *efakó* group by itself would be insufficient to secure efficient cultivation —be it because of its smallness, or an unforeseen obstacle such as illness among its members, or irregular rains,[1] or simply because its ambitious programme demands larger co-operation than is at its disposal. The Nupe have two systems of collective labour devised to operate in different situations: *egbe* (the Hausa *gaya*) and *dzolo*.

The *egbe* is the more general type of collective labour. It is not limited to farm-work, but is organized for every kind of work which demands large-scale co-operation and specially for work done, not for one household alone, but for the community at large. Thus the building or roofing of a big house, for example the chief's house, repairs of a bush-bridge or a stretch of road which is maintained by the village, are carried out in *egbe* work; repairs of the town wall, formerly, and repairs of the building of a Native Administration rest-house, to-day, are equally typical occasions for the *egbe*. However, in Bida and in many larger places a large proportion of work of this kind has now been taken over by professional labour. But in Bida as well as in the hinterland farm *egbe* is still practised regularly.

561 The help of *egbe* for farming is enlisted mostly for tilling and the first
476 and second weeding, more rarely for the third weeding and the clearing of new yam-plots. A few days before the *egbe* is to take place the young
241 men of the family go round to their friends and neighbours and invite them to the *egbe* on such and such a day. *Egbe* work is on the whole work for the younger people. A ready frame for their co-operation exists in the age-grade associations of which all the young men of a district are members. As they arrange throughout the year meetings and feasts in which they all join, they now organize the collective farm-work for one of their fellow member's family. The family head sends out a special invitation to drummers and musicians to play at the *egbe*. The accompaniment of music plays a very important part. Finally, the host prepares food and beer for the feast with which the *egbe* invariably ends.

[533] Early in the morning drummers and flute-players walk out to the farm on which the *egbe* is to take place. They play and sing while they walk, beating on their drums the characteristic rhythm of *egbe* music, and everyone who meets them knows at once their destination. Some of the

[1] I once witnessed a third weeding carried out by collective labour in September, after an unexpected dry spell. The farmer explained to me that if the rains had been normal and ordinary farm-work not delayed, he would have carried out the third weeding in ordinary family work.

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assigned to the men and the other to the women, are involved and intricate. We will discuss them here only in so far as they refer to the household arrangements and leave the discussion of marketing proper for later.

The most elementary 'refining' process in this respect is the cooking for the household. In our general description we have reached the point when the various crops from the family farm have been harvested and stored. From these stores the family head will hand out regularly a certain amount to the wives for cooking. The arrangement varies with different crops: grain and beans, for example, are dispensed by the family head as a rule once a week or once in ten days; yams are brought in from the farm (where they are stored) about twice or three times a week, in the case of a family of three or four adults four to six yams each time, i.e. a supply sufficient for from two to three days; rice, the most expensive of all foodstuffs, is handed out only for the day when it is needed for cooking. The women plan the meals, but the men being in charge of the stores always know beforehand what they are going to have; occasionally they even order the 'menu' for the day. The amount of food which the men allow for cooking is adjusted to the exact requirements: for example, if the men are having their midday meal on the farm, where they cook their own yam or cassava, they will hand out a proportionately smaller supply of yams, two or three, for the house, which must last for three days. In the town and among non-farmers the family head gives his wife or wives money for buying the necessary food about once in a week or ten days. The family head, however, does not provide for all meals, nor for every foodstuff needed in the household. He contributes food only for the main meals, midday and evening meal, and then only the bulk of the meal: grain, yams, rice, fish, and meat. Of other ingredients such as pepper, okra, or certain greens, he provides only those which he has grown himself. Other even most essential ingredients the wife must invariably procure herself—even though they may have been obtained from trees growing on the land of the husband—namely, *kula* (made of locust-bean), *kuka* (made of the leaves of the baobab tree), palm-oil, shea-butter, and also salt. These things the wife has to buy in the market with her own money. Unless food has been left over from the night before, the morning meal consists mostly of corn-water or gruel, sometimes eaten with ground-nut or bean pastries, and is made of foodstuffs invariably supplied by the women. They will share the morning meal with their husbands, but will only sell it to the other members of the household, even including the children, for whose meal their father has to pay. Pastries and savouries are always made of foodstuffs which the women have to buy with their own money. They are then sold, and with considerable profit, in the markets or streets, except the titbits which a mother will always put aside for her children. If the husband feels he would like one of these delicacies he has to buy it, either from his wife or some other woman pastry-cook.

The Nupe women have also other, more important, sources of income which more than balance the financial obligations which they have to undertake in the household arrangement. The services of the women

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462 are indispensable, and are accordingly rewarded in the disposal of crops intended for marketing. There are various methods in the disposal of 542 crops. One is the following: the family head hands the produce he intends to sell over to his wife, either the whole produce at once, immedi- 443 ately after the harvest, or small quantities at different times, according to whether he is in need of ready money or can wait for a better price later in the year. His wife will then sell the produce in the market and return the money she received for it to the husband. He gives her a little of this money, half as present, half as commission. His gift varies with the price which she has managed to obtain, and will express his appreciation of her more or less clever marketing. The woman may, of course, have to try a good many different markets if she wants to obtain the best price; and the men may not always be in a position to check the price which their wives quote to them after the sale. My information is that the women do not hesitate to take advantage of this lack of control; but the men, it seems, are as well aware of this and regard it as a legitimate way of making money. Another method, possible only if the women have sufficient money in hand, is this: the family head sells the whole produce directly to his wife after the harvest. She pays for it, stores the produce in her own granaries, and sells it later in the year when prices have gone up, possibly in small quantities at a time to obtain the best price. This method is as a rule applied in the disposal of palm-kernels and the fruits of the locust-bean tree. Another method in the disposal of crops does not enlist the help of the women of the house—although it may have to enlist the help of other women in the person of the traders. It is limited to a few kinds of produce only: rice, kola-nuts, and also palm-kernels in case one's own wife is not an expert in oil-making; these goods are sold by the family head directly to professional traders.

So far the role of the Nupe woman—more precisely the wife of the 462 Nupe farmer—is that of a 'broker' and 'middleman'. In the disposal of 542 the produce of certain fruit-bearing trees, however, the women are assigned direct and absolute property rights. The fruit of the locust- 422 bean so far as it has to be plucked from the tree is disposed of in the way described above; but the fallen fruits of that tree belong entirely to the women of the house. They can do with them what they like, and the money which they obtain from the sale of the raw as well as the 'refined' produce belongs to them. Also, the whole produce of the shea-nut tree belongs to the women. The exploitation of the shea-nut tree, the fruit of which is of comparatively high commercial value, is regarded as a definite monopoly of the Nupe women, and as representing a direct compensation for their contribution to the expenses of the household.

462 The picking of the fruit of the shea-nut tree by small groups of women 476 also furnishes an example of a co-operative organization among the 461 women beyond the single household or family, somewhat similar to the 533 system of collective labour organized by the men. There exists another form of collective female labour which is regarded by the people themselves as the exact counterpart to the men's *egbe*. As the men, in *egbe* work, build or repair houses and roofs, the women's collective work is

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placed, with charcoal piled over it. The 'cave' (*e*) is connected, by means of a narrow airshaft, with the mouth of the chimney (*b*). Cave and square pit are separated by a semi-circular clay plate (*f*), 1½ feet high, which is cemented into the opening so that it leaves only a small triangular hole open at the bottom. Through this hole the slag pours into the pit. One worker sits on a crude wooden bench which is supported by a timber structure (*g*), behind the bellows; he is relieved every hour. Other workers, two or three in number, act as stokers, feed the furnace with fuel and iron ore, and remove the slag by means of a long wooden stick with iron points, so that the small hole in the clay plate should be kept open. The iron ore is broken into small pieces by means of stones or hammers before it is placed in the furnace. The smelted ore remains behind the clay plate until the whole process is finished; then the clay plate is broken and the iron removed. The clay plate has to be made new and fixed in position every time the furnace is put to use. With the furnace all prepared, a lump of iron of the size of a large yam fruit can be produced in five to six hours' work.

We have already seen that the organization of blacksmith work and iron-ore mining (as of all guild-organized craft-work) involves two different types of co-operation, the actual working together of the labour or *efakó*-unit, and the wider co-operation in the framework of the occupational unit, the guild itself. We will examine first the composition of the labour-unit.

The men whom we find working in the same workshop are all related and belong to the same family group or section of the family group. The common workshop does not, however, invariably establish the labour-unit; the workshop group is the wider unit, for the men who occupy the same workshop are not necessarily also co-workers in the narrow sense. The labour-unit itself corresponds to the small individual family or section of the family—a father and his sons, or a number of brothers, who divide all work among themselves and in certain respects share the proceeds. All more important work is regarded as *efakó* work, i.e. the family head buys the raw material and receives the proceeds from the work carried out by his group. Less important work, mainly small repairs of hoes or axes, is regarded as *bucá*, and the money received for it belongs to the individual worker. Only adults, however, practise *bucá* work; small boys who are yet too young to carry out serious blacksmith work are assigned the work of blowing the bellows. In workshops where there are no young boys, the adult workers may take the bellows in turn; occasionally a woman, the wife of one of the blacksmiths, may help out.

The relation between these various units, workshop group, family group, and *efakó* group, is involved and variable. It will be best to illustrate it with actual examples. The first two are taken from the largest blacksmith group in Bida, the *Dokodza* people. In one of their workshops we find two adults and two boys working together—the boys blowing the bellows. They all belong to the same family and live in the same house. The two adults are brothers, and the two boys the sons of the elder brother. The four workers form a single labour-unit, under

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326 592 the elder of the two brothers, who is *efakó* and family head in one. His younger brother practises *bucá* work in addition to the family work. In another smithy (the smithy of the guild-head himself) we find five men sharing the workshop. They belong to the same family and live in the same house; their common family head is the *Dokodza*, the guild-head. The workshop group is divided into two labour-units. One, consisting of three men, is headed by the *Dokodza*'s younger brother, who works together with his two sons; the other, consisting of two men, the sons of the *Dokodza*, is headed—nominally—by the guild-head himself; being an old man he leaves the actual work to his sons. Each of the workers also has his own *bucá* work.

In the other blacksmith groups, especially in the villages, we find a more loosely knit co-operative organization with much smaller labour-units. In a workshop of the Beni blacksmiths in Bida I found four men working together, two adult brothers and the two young sons of one of the brothers. The kinship configuration is thus the same as in our first example; but here the workshop group is divided into two labour-units, one formed by the father and his sons, and the other, a 'one-man-unit', by the man's brother. Among the Kutigi blacksmiths one workshop numbered four men. They were two brothers and two more distant relations (a father's brother's son and a father's brother's grandson). The workshop was divided into four labour-units, each man working on his own. It will be seen that in these last two examples the division between *efakó* and *bucá* work has disappeared.

In addition to the craft the blacksmiths as a rule also practise a little agriculture on the farm-plots close to their houses, where they grow a few crops 'for the mouth'. These farm-plots are tended mostly by the old men of the family, who can no longer carry on the heavy work in the smithy. The crops belong to the family head, and are regarded as *efakó* property.

Blacksmith work, closely associated as it is with the requirements of agriculture for which it produces the main tools, is subject to the same market fluctuations. It has its busy season in the early rains, and is slack during the dry season. From December to February, the quietest season of the year, one smithy in Bida was producing four hoes a month; other workshops were doing only minor repairs. For two months, during the planting season (May and June), the same smithy turned out four hoes a day. At that time of the year the blacksmiths lay in a large store of hoe- and axe-blades, which is quickly disposed of in the village markets, while during the dry season they must often send their wives to the surrounding villages and hamlets to find customers for their products.

326 434 435 Let us examine the question of profits and cost of production. A blacksmith buys, for example, a lump of iron ore for 2*s.*; this quantity is sufficient for the making of six heavy or ten light hoes, which he sells at the price of 6*d.* and 1*s.* a-piece respectively, exclusive of the handle (which would be another 1½*d.*). On one hoe he makes a profit of between 2*d.* and 3*d.* In the busy season, when the blacksmiths have their hands full with work, the prices go up. A hoe which would be sold for 6*d.* in the dry season fetches 8*d.* in the rains, and one that would be sold for 1*s.*

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minutes to produce a medium-sized bangle; I estimated the total daily output of a single workshop at from fifty to sixty bangles.

The finished articles, the coloured and ornamented bangles and beads, are left to cool in a heap of ashes inside the hut to be collected later in large baskets and to be put aside for the traders who call regularly at the *masagá* quarter. The glass-workers have a small but busy market of their own in the centre of their quarter. To this market the traders in bottle-glass bring their goods, women from neighbouring hamlets and farms the daily supply of firewood, and other women traders grain and various food-stuffs for the households of the glass-workers. The traders in the finished article, however, buy the bangles and beads directly from the producers, i.e. the individual workshop. These traders are both men and women and, among the women, both wives of the glass-workers and women from outside. The *masagá* themselves never trade their glass-ware. Bida glass is bought and sold all over Nigeria—it is to be seen in every larger market of the country, in Lagos in the south, and in Kano in the north. There is a steady demand for it, and the *masagá* work regularly six days a week (resting only on Friday), all through the year, always certain of disposing easily of their output. They have neither time nor inclination for additional agricultural work, not even in the restricted form of farming 'for the mouth' which is common among all other Nupe craftsmen.

The people who work together in the same workshop are, as in the case of blacksmiths and brass-smiths, mostly close relations. But among the glass-workers the group which shares a common workshop also forms a single labour- or *efakó*-unit, working under a common head who organizes the group work, disposes of its output, and, in *efakó* manner, controls the income produced by the group. Even distant relations or strangers who have joined a workshop fall under the *efakó* rules. The labour organization of the *masagá*, then, does not allow for an individual *bucá* income in addition to the group income. Instead we find a new arrangement in the form of small regular 'wages' (at the rate of 2*d*. a day) which the *efakó* head pays his adult co-workers out of the income produced by the group. He keeps the rest and, with it, defrays the costs of production, i.e. the costs of fuel and raw glass or the occasional purchase of new tools from the blacksmiths, as well as the various family expenses entailed in his position as *efakó* head. This financial arrangement is clearly necessitated by the special conditions of labour: it would indeed be extremely difficult to calculate the share of the individual worker in this strongly co-operative form of production. The intensive co-operation itself is explained by the nature of this 'mass production' and by the demands of efficiency and economy: the use of a common furnace and a common store of fuel and raw material, the specialized tasks of the individual workshops and, in the single workshop, the elaborate division of labour, are all calculated to ensure a high degree of efficiency and economy. We note that the means of production are partly produced by joint labour (e.g. the building of the furnace), and partly purchased by the leader of the labour-unit out of his share in the group income (e.g. the iron tools, the fuel); and we note further that this method of production,

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which, in the interest of efficiency, has evolved centralized control of labour and means of production on a comparatively large scale, comes closer than any other Nupe craft to the principle of the modern factory system.

We have already seen that in the group at large, i.e. in the glass-workers' guild, a similar intensive co-operation obtains. Its organization falls to the guild-head, who assigns the different tasks to the various workshops and is responsible for the general planning of production. This planning must take into account the varying conditions of the market, and we find, in fact, that the guild-head, without interfering with the commercial transactions of the individual workshop, regularly consults traders and middlemen who visit the *masagá* quarter, and maps out accordingly the scheme of work for his community. On my many visits to the *masagá* I found that the guild-head could always tell me what kind of work was carried out in the various workshops, or when a particular workshop would start on a new task. The guild-head, who styles himself *Masagá*, has his own workshop, where his sons and brothers are working. He does not often work there himself, but certain difficult tasks, such as the making of very big, heavy bangles, which fetch the highest price, he alone can perform. The guild-head assists his co-workers with advice and practical help, also with small loans of money for the purchase of raw material or fuel; he arbitrates in internal quarrels, and he is, like all Nupe guild-heads, the accredited representative of his guild at the Nupe court.

The ever-expanding business of the Bida glass industry involves an almost permanent need of new labour. Formerly the glass-workers bought slaves and trained them in the craft in order to enlarge their machinery of production. To-day they are regularly accepting apprentices. In 1936 five young men were being trained as glass-workers. An apprentice applies to the guild-head, who will then place him in charge of a certain workshop. The training is calculated to take three years, during which time the apprentices continue to live in their own homes and come to the *masagá* quarter only to work. But when their apprenticeship is completed they not only move into the *masagá* quarter, but are expected to marry *masagá* women (as did also the slaves in former days). This adoption into the kinship group is considered essential and is as much a qualification for the practice of the craft as is the technical training itself. Thus the monopoly of the glass-workers is kept intact, and no new branches can be established outside their organization. Kinship interests and kinship co-operation are enlisted in the service of professional co-operation and solidarity and in maintaining the continuity of a highly specialized, monopolized and almost secret, technique of production. Economic interests, in turn, are seen to be sufficiently powerful to effect a radical adjustment in the kinship structure, and to create, in a patrilineal society, a matrilineal enclave.

WEAVERS

The weavers, called *edelucišī*, present another instance of the tripartite organization of Bida crafts. Each of the three *ekpā* of the town harbours one of the three guild sections of the weavers. However,

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according to Nupe tradition, weaving was not originally a guild-organized craft, but a free profession carried out individually, like mat-weaving, for example, to-day. It became a 'closed profession' and a guild-organized craft when the Nupe kings imported craftsmen from the south, who brought with them their own special technique and who, aliens in Nupe country, kept to themselves, neither intermarrying nor coming much in contact with the rest of the population. These imported groups of weavers were *konú*, freed slaves of war. They form two of the three groups of weavers which we find in Bida to-day. The first is composed of people from Salu, a town in Yagba country, who were settled in Bida by *Etsu* Masaba. The members of this group, which is the largest of the three weaver guilds, live scattered over the whole town; their guild-head, however, used to reside in the *Etsu* Masaba quarter. The second *konú* group is of Yorùba extraction, and is concentrated in the *Etsu* Usman quarter. This group has representatives also outside Bida, in a number of Nupe villages: Kutigi, Enagi, Sakpe, and Dabbā. The third group of weavers, in the *Etsu* Umaru quarter, is composed of Nupe proper. It is a very small group, consisting only of one compound. This Nupe group of weavers forms a section of a large kinship group which comprises farmers, who live outside Bida, as well. They trace their profession to a man who came to Bida from Rabá, as a *bara* of *Etsu* Umaru. Originally a warrior, this man later settled in the town and learned weaving from a *konú* craftsman. At that time, I was told, weaving was a lucrative and highly respected profession. Weaving has been the profession of his family for three generations now, and the family heads are received at the court and treated as official representatives of their group like all heads of guilds or guild sections. Small groups of weavers of Nupe extraction are also found in various villages in the Emirate. Their labour organization closely resembles that of this last group of weavers, but they remain outside the Bida guild system.

The technique of weaving is the same in all groups. Their loom is of the narrow upright type, worked with pedals, which is common all over Northern Nigeria. These looms produce narrow strips of cloth 5 inches wide. The looms are placed in a half-open shed, six to seven in one row, in the inner courtyard of the compound, each loom being worked by one man. The weavers have to buy a large proportion of their tools from other craftsmen: the shuttle and the wooden posts on which the loom rests, and which are frequently beautifully carved and painted, are made by the carpenters; the iron rods used as pedals and the iron bar upon which the finished strips of cloth are wound, are made by the blacksmiths. Only the weaver's reed is produced by the weavers themselves. A complete outfit for one man costs from 6s. to 12s., according to whether cheap plain or expensive carved wooden posts are used. The Bida weavers use mostly thread of European manufacture, both plain and coloured, and only very rarely native-ginned and -dyed cotton. The village weavers use mostly the latter kind.

The men who occupy a common workshed are members of the same family and household group. In one house, for example, I found

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thirteen looms, of which only ten were actually used, as the family numbered at that time only ten adult men. The individualistic nature of this work, however, in which no actual working together of several individuals is involved, is reflected in the restricted *efakó* arrangement, which comprises only a man and his young, as yet unmarried, sons. As soon as the sons are married, they work on their own, although they may continue to use the looms and tools which the family head had allotted to them when they were still working in the *efakó* group. The *efakó* head also supplies them with cotton thread for the start. When they are fairly launched on their new individual work they have to buy their own raw material from the proceeds of their work. Only the looms are still regarded as family property, and are kept in repair or replaced if necessary by the head of the household. In this case the individual worker pays the family head a regular 'rent' (called *lada*, lit. wages) of 2*d.* in every 3*s.* which he earns with his work—an arrangement which clearly takes into account the high cost of new looms. This arrangement, however, has been dropped; the young workers make themselves responsible for the cost of repairs or the purchase of their means of production, and the family head only receives occasional presents of food and clothing. In a number of cases I found the *efakó*-unit still further reduced, and even unmarried sons working on their own as soon as they reached the age when tax had to be paid for them. The difficulty which many family heads have to-day in providing tax money for a large family explains this disintegration of the labour-unit. The steadily declining demand for native woven cloth has been the main cause. In many houses looms stand unused, because weaving is no longer profitable, and young men, released from the *efakó*-unit, use their newly won leisure to turn at least temporarily to other, more lucrative, professions. In one weaver's family one of the three sons had given up weaving and become a messenger in the District Office; in another family, two of the six sons became servants in houses of Europeans, and only one of the two returned to his old profession after a number of years, having collected enough money for his bride-price and for a new start in his former profession.

The individual weaver is free to plan his work independently, and there are a number of different methods which he can adopt. The long narrow strips of cloth which the Nupe looms produce are always woven to a standard length of ten *kpere*, i.e. arm's lengths, the weaving of which takes five days. The most expensive, striped, cloth is then cut into five strips of two *kpere* each and sewn together, edge to edge, to form the complete *ede*, cloth, of the kind worn by women round the waist or as kerchiefs over the head. It is reckoned that one man can produce three to four lengths every month. The Nupe weavers work every day except Friday, but much time is taken up in getting the cloth sold. A weaver can entrust his goods to one of the brokers who have their shops on the Bida night market; but nowadays this means a long wait—even if one is lucky enough to get the cloth sold at all. Many younger men prefer therefore to do their own trading, and wander through the villages, often for three or five days, selling their cloth in village markets where there is less competition both in native-made and European goods. One piece of

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cloth of this expensive kind is sold for 4*s.* 6*d.*; as the cost of the material is 3*s.* 4*d.*, the profit made in five days' work is 1*s.* 2*d.*, or just under 3*d.* a day. If cheaper, plain material is used the profit is slightly smaller; the cost of the material for one piece of cloth is 1*s.* 6*d.*, and the cloth is sold for 2*s.* 6*d.*, six pieces being again produced each month, which gives a profit of 1*s.* per cloth, or 2*d.* a day. But instead of cutting up and sewing together the cloth in form of the *ede*, the weaver can also sell the full-length cloth as such to the cap-makers, or, better still, can make it into caps himself. A weaver can produce one cap (made of one *kpere* of cloth) each day, that is, twenty caps a month, allowing for two intervals of five days each for the weaving of the cloth. The white cloth caps, called *fula*, are very popular in Bida and are sold at prices from 9*d.* to 1*s.*; the cost of the material being 6*s.* 8*d.* the profit on twenty caps is thus between 7*s.* and 12*s.*, or from 3*d.* to 5*d.* a day. It is interesting to note that this last kind of work, although more profitable and also in much greater demand, is nevertheless regarded as a slightly degrading occupation. *Fula* making, my informants pointed out, is tailor's work, and not the proper work for trained weavers; they undertake it, as they frankly admit, only in order to obtain money for tax or bride-price. In this respect, then, the dissolution of the *efakó*-unit offers another benefit to the young members of the group who are out for quick money: for, relieved of their duties towards the head of the group, they are also relieved of their duties towards the ethical standards of the profession, to which the older men still cling.

In the villages only cheaper qualities of cloth, mostly native-dyed cloth, are produced; striped cloth which is sold for 1*s.* 3*d.*, the material costing 9*d.* and the dye 3*d.*, and plain indigo-dyed cloth (a kind of cloth that would find no buyers in Bida), sold for 1*s.* 9*d.*, and produced at a cost of 1*s.* 3*d.* But even when the village weavers produce the same kind of cloth as the Bida craftsmen, they sell it cheaper, being content with a smaller profit. Thus striped cloth of the kind sold in Bida for 2*s.* 6*d.* is produced by the village artisan for 2*s.*, allowing a profit of 9*d.* instead of 1*s.* 2*d.* On the other hand, the work and material of the village weavers are known to be inferior to that of the Bida craftsmen. The village weavers frankly admit it. They use the cruder indigenous dye instead of European dyes, they gin their own cotton and work with this inferior cotton-thread which breaks frequently during the weaving. They take ten days for the weaving of a piece of cloth which the Bida craftsmen finish in five. But just because they limit themselves to this cheaper and cruder material and cater exclusively for the less wealthy customers, they can stand the competition of European cloth better than the Bida weavers, who have specialized in more ambitious and expensive work. Here are the comparative prices: a striped cloth of European (or Japanese) manufacture is sold in Bida for 5*s.*, as against 4*s.* 6*d.* for Bida-woven cloth and 1*s.* 3*d.* for cloth produced in the village.

Formerly, when the *efakó* system in weaving was still capable of supporting a whole family, the younger members of the *efakó* group practised a little farm-work as *bucá*. The family head did not join in this additional work and often, if he was an old man, he did not even take part in actual weaving. His income was supplemented by training

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apprentices. This source of income, formerly quite considerable, disappeared when weaving became less profitable. Young boys of about 10 years, mostly sons of farmers, were the pupils; they stayed with the weaver for from four to five years, and the work which they produced during the time of their apprenticeship belonged to their master; when their training was completed the parents of the pupil would bring one bundle of corn as payment.

The loose organization of the labour-unit has its counterpart in the organization of the profession at large. Among the weavers no co-operation on a larger scale exists. We have even seen that individuals are quite ready to abandon the profession for other, more attractive, work—an attitude unprecedented among blacksmiths or glass-workers. Yet the symbols of guild organization, the guild ranks, are still preserved. Each group of weavers has its titled guild-head: the head of the Salu (Yagba) weavers is called *Majī*, and the head of the Yoruba weavers *Leshe*. He is also regarded as the head of all *konú* weavers in Nupe, and used to receive from them small annual gifts or tributes. But this common allegiance and co-operation reflects less the professional union than the tribal and cultural unity of these scattered Yoruba groups in Nupe country. The head of the Nupe group of weavers in Bida has no official title but is called simply *Ndakó*, Grandfather. The position of the group-head carries to-day none of the influence and authority which characterizes the guild-heads of other crafts; he neither receives gifts from the fellow craftsmen nor is he expected to advise or help them in their work. As in all other guild-organized crafts the official position of the guild-heads of the weavers was based originally on their role as intermediaries between the king and the craftsmen of Bida. But this role has lost very early all practical importance—earlier than it did in the other Nupe crafts. To quote the guild-head of the Yagba weavers: '*Etsu* Masaba still used to come to our workshops and order cloth personally from the *Majī*. But *Etsu* Umaru, who came after him, already bought what he needed on the market, and so did all the later kings of Nupe.'

BEADWORKERS

As a last example of guild-organized industries I will describe the organization of the beadworkers in Bida. Their craft shows certain specific features which make it specially interesting and distinguish it from the other crafts of Nupe. Beadworking represents, first of all, a typical refining industry, which involves a system of re-exportation comparable only to the most complex forms of economic enterprise found in Western civilization. It involves further the use of money capital and credit operations on a scale unparalleled in Nupe industry. It is, finally, a pure luxury industry, producing more expensive goods than either glass- or brass-work. These various factors have contributed to making the beadworking industry of Bida extremely vulnerable; it has suffered more than the other crafts from the economic stress of the recent years and, a significant result of this, presents the picture of a complete disintegration of co-operative production.

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There are three groups of bead-makers, *lantana*, as they are called, in Bida, one in each part of the town. Their work consists in 'refining' the crude or plain beads which are brought into the country from the north by Hausa and Arab traders, that is to say, they polish and sometimes bore these beads and grind them to various new shapes. The grinding and polishing is done on large flat sandstones especially brought to Bida from the river Niger. The grindstones and a few small iron tools for boring represent all the utensils used by the beadworkers; they are comparatively cheap—the grindstones are sold for 1*s.* in Bida—and the full equipment of a worker costs not more than two or three shillings. The beads are finished in different styles according to the nature of the bead and also according to the prevailing fashion and the demands of the market. The following styles of beads are in fashion to-day: long slender round beads, used for the *egbogi*, the chains of beads which the Nupe women wear round the waist; small ball-like round beads, with highly polished surface; and small flat triangular beads, worn as necklaces. The Nupe dislike edged beads and beads with dull surface; beads of this kind are polished and ground down to the desired shape and appearance. The grinding and polishing of the beads is a long and delicate work. The average production per worker is three beads a day. The finished beads are strung on cotton thread and arranged in long chains in which beads of different kinds and styles are often mixed, and are then ready for the market.

The beadworkers have no special workshops, but carry out their craft in the entrance hut of the compound. Four or five men are working in one hut; each man works independently, sitting on the ground behind his grindstone. As in all other crafts, the men who share the workshop are usually close relations who live in the house of which the entrance hut serves as workshop. Occasionally there is a distant relation or a stranger amongst them who lives in another house and comes there only to work. More rarely an individual beadworker who has no relations practising the same profession would work alone in his own house. Traders and buyers, who bring beads to be polished or bored, or who collect the finished article, are constant visitors in the workshops of the *lantana*.

In the economic arrangement which obtains in the Bida beadworking industry the majority of workers are reduced to the position of mere labourers, working to order and paid at a piece-rate. One of the bead-makers in the workshop may act as contractor: he buys the crude beads from the Hausa or Arab trader and has them worked by his fellow workers. He divides the work among them and pays them ½*d.* per bead. The finished chain of beads is entrusted to the wife of the contractor; she will sell it in the market or to one of the traders in beads, who will then 're-export' these products of Bida fashion industry to the north. A chain of crude beads bought for 7*s.* will fetch 10*s.* as the finished article; 2*d.* to 3*d.* go to the woman 'middleman' as commission, and about 1*s.* 8*d.* (for a chain, say, of forty beads) goes to pay the wages of the labourers, so the contractor can make a net profit of 1*s.* 2*d.* on work that took three to four days to complete; the individual labourers make in the same

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the hands of a middleman, for 11*d.* or 1*s.* The square grass mats take ten days to make; the material costs 7*d.* or 8*d.*, and the mat is sold for from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 2*s.* The mats made of stalks take a fortnight to make; the material costs nothing, as the stalks are found on the farm of the craftsman, and the dye is produced from the sorghum stalks; a plain mat of this kind is sold for 8*d.*, a dyed mat for 1*s.*

If we reduce these various figures illustrating cost and profit to the average profit per day made by the individual craftsman (assuming that he is always working to full capacity) we obtain the following table:[1]

Commodity	*Profit per day*
Straw hats	1*d.*
Grass-mats, oval	1*d.*
Grass-mats, square	1½*d.*
Mats made of stalk	1½*d.*
Caps, embroidered	2*d.*
Saddle-cloth, plain	3*d.*
Saddle-cloth, embroidered	4*d.*
Caps, machine-made	8*d.*
Gowns, machine-made	1*s.* 10*d.*
Gowns, embroidered	3*s.* 0*d.*

It will be seen that the Nupe price system is highly discriminative both with regard to the taste and skill needed in the production of a particular article and to the factor of risk involved in the production of more expensive and 'luxury' goods, the demand for which is less widespread. Hat-making, regarded commonly as the easiest craft of all, and at the same time a craft working for large constant demand, is remunerated most cheaply; the embroidering of gowns, which involves considerable taste and skill, and which can reckon only with a comparatively small and irregular demand, is remunerated most highly. This calculation of price and profit holds good similarly for the other products on our list. However, there are two conspicuous exceptions: machine-tailored gowns and machine-tailored caps command a price quite out of proportion with the other products of Bida handicrafts. We shall return later to this anomaly.

Even in these individual crafts we find whole families or household groups following the same profession. But just as often we find households in which three or four different professions are represented, and houses in which tailors, hat-makers, embroiderers, and, say, cushion-makers practise their craft at the same time, in the same *katamba*. In these crafts which involve no special training and in which the novice derives no special benefit from partnership with the more experienced older men, individual preferences have free play and outweigh possible tendencies to follow the example of one's family or one's elders. Bida

[1] At the time when these figures were recorded prices were lower than usual (see p. 292). The relation between the various prices, however, had remained unchanged. The profits quoted for mat-making in Kutigi supplement the statement made previously that mat-making represents a lucrative leisure-time occupation for the Nupe farmer. The demand for mats is, in fact, increasing, and latterly Kutigi mats have been exported to England through the United Africa Company.

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men are always ready to try their hand at something new, and changes of profession are frequent. The record is held, perhaps, by a Bida man who started as a mat-maker (the occupation of his older brother), changed over to cushion-making, then to tailoring, and eventually to leather-work, which he found more lucrative and which he is practising at present. *Eʃakó* co-operation on the narrowest basis, between father and unmarried sons, occurs occasionally. Thus in a family of embroiderers a father and two sons worked together; working on the same gown, the father would execute the more elaborate designs, while his two sons carried out the simpler embroidery; the sons were maintained by the father, and all earnings went to him. With simpler kind of work, this co-operation is reduced further, and we find, for example, this arrangement between a father and his unmarried son, both straw-hat makers: the father took half of his son's earnings, and in return maintained him, and would in due course pay part of his bride-price (he would be unable to bear the full expense). But in the majority of cases this rudimentary co-operation, too, disappears, and even unmarried sons work entirely on their own.

One might wonder whether these 'individualistic' crafts have not, at some previous stage, shown a larger measure of co-operative organization. Remembering the weakening of guild-organized crafts under the pressure of modern conditions, we might, in fact, ask whether the individual crafts as we find them to-day do not represent merely a final stage of that incipient disintegration. This is indeed the case in one of the industries practised to-day as individual crafts—leather-work. Leather-work involves specialized technique and skill in much higher measure than do the other individual handicrafts. But it also used to involve comparatively large-scale co-operation of a group of workers, in the sense of an efficient division of labour, which was meant to ensure the execution of large and frequently urgent orders. A guild-head, called *Magaji*, organized and controlled group production; he also acted as the official intermediary between the craftsmen and the king, who was, again, their most important customer: for the Bida leather-workers supplied a large proportion of the military equipment of the Nupe army, such as saddlery and leather shields, sword-sheaths, and quivers for arrows.

The individual craft which is most a product of modern conditions is machine-tailoring. It introduces certain new features into the productive system of Nupe which are of special interest to the student of culture contact. Machine-tailoring does not demand long training or special skill—young men learn to use a sewing-machine in a week. The machine-tailor can reckon with a very constant demand for his services. The number of machine-tailors in Nupe has, in fact, greatly increased even during the periods which I spent in the country. In 1936, for example, I found six sewing-machines in Kutigi market, against three in 1934. Machine-tailors, like ordinary tailors, will regularly visit village markets (walking perhaps ten miles or more, carrying the sewing-machines on their heads), and appear in villages a fortnight or month before an annual festival, when their services will be greatly in demand.

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has his own speciality, his own expert knowledge, his cures, and his special field. No wonder, then, that the Bida barbers are not of equal standing: there are famous 'celebrities', and there are also the smaller fry. The public is aware of these distinctions. It is well aware also of the special field of certain foreign barber-doctors who frequently come to Bida to practise. Thus, for example, it is generally known that the operation of removing the uvula of children—an operation said to help growth and secure better nourishment—is performed only by Hausa barbers. The more surprising, then, is the fact that this array of specialists and special cures is not equally accessible to every citizen of Bida or Nupe. For the barbers are organized in three independent guilds, one in each *ekpā* of the town. Neither doctors nor patients ever ignore these boundaries. Each guild, or guild section, is under its own titled head, who as a rule has also a 'second-in-command' (who is 'heir designate' to the guild-headship at the same time) to assist him in guild work. In the *Etsu* Umaru quarter guild-head and 'second-in-command' are called *Ndeji* and *Ndabaki*; in the *Etsu* Usman quarter *Tsadzo* and *Ndamaraki*; in the *Etsu* Masaba quarter we find only one guild rank, who is the present head of the guild at large, the *Sokyara*. This highest guild office is taken in rotation by the three guild sections.

The Bida barbers, busy and prosperous, do not practise farming in addition to their main occupation; nor do sons of barbers ever follow any other profession. On the contrary, men of other professions may become barbers. I have recorded three recent cases: two were adults, one a farmer and the other a (Fulani) herdsman; the third was a young man, the son of a straw-hat maker; the two adults settled later as barbers in villages; the young man, who came from Bida, remained there to practise his craft. To learn the barbers' craft proper does not take long: the apprentice works only a year under a master (without changing his habitation). The master, during this time, pockets the larger part of the apprentice's earnings. The apprentice himself buys the instruments of his new trade—a collection of old-fashioned razors, costing about 4*s*. to 5*s*. But to learn the medical side of the craft requires (I was told) a five-years' apprenticeship. One of the two men just mentioned had done this, and is to-day a practising 'doctor'. Let me add that neither the 'trade secrets' of the barber-doctors nor the training in the craft involve any magical or religious conception and form of procedure. It is purely a craft technique.

The special cures and forms of treatment are secrets of individual barber families. They are handed on from generation to generation and are the common property of all adults in a family (though not of the

[1] Nupe society also possesses a certain group of 'doctors', or, more precisely, 'medicine-men'—*cigbeciši* (*cigbe* means 'medicine')—whose craft is based on magical ideas and is closely linked with divining and the religious system of the country. I cannot describe here their organization more fully. I will only say that they practise mostly in the pagan districts, and that they are united in a loose 'order', acknowledging a common head, the *Etsu Cigbeciši* in Bida. To-day the modern conception of the barber-doctor is gaining ground also in the pagan villages. I found a significant effect of this transition in two Nupe villages—'medicine-men' and diviners who were practising barbers at the same time.

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larger group, the guild section or guild). The work of the barbers is organized on the familiar lines of *efakó* and *bucá*. Although their work does not entail actually working together, a certain kind of work is regarded as a concern of the family group as such and as falling under the rules of *efakó*. The *efakó* principle itself is interpreted in an unusual sense. In the work of the barbers orders or summons do not usually reach the individual barber directly, but come to him via the head of the household, who allots the various tasks to the different family members. The proceeds from all work carried out on these lines are divided among the whole *efakó* group, in accordance with a certain schedule which takes into account the seniority of the different family members. The tasks which come under *efakó* rule are the most highly paid jobs: the shaving of the hair and the cutting of tribal marks at the name-giving ceremony, and the circumcision of boys. The first task is performed at the occasion of an important household feast, and the barber-doctors rarely fail to benefit from the generosity that goes with festal mood. These simpler operations are executed by the younger men of the family, but the family head and the older men will also be present, as guests quite as much as in their professional capacity—which latter may reveal itself in no more than an occasional hint thrown out to the young colleague. The barbers will all sit together, and in front of them there will be a bowl into which every visitor is expected to drop a coin, the largest contribution coming from the parents of the newborn child. Let us follow the fate of a shilling dropped into this bowl of the barbers at a name-giving ceremony in a Bida house: 2*d.* is retained by the grandmother, who held the infant during the operation; 1*d.* goes to each of the five junior members of the *efakó* group (including the young man who performed the operation); 1½*d.* each to two older men of the family, the family head and his younger brother; and 2*d.*, finally, to the head of the guild section.

All other work of the barbers is regarded as *bucá*: ordinary haircutting and shaving as well as medical treatment.[1] The latter, more lucrative, work is a prerogative of the older men, who alone know herbs and drugs and can perform the *turare*. The younger men will be taught these craft secrets when they reach a certain age. And thus another principle of family work is realized in the organization of the Nupe barber-doctors, namely, the balance in favour of senior family members which we have observed in the organization of farm-labour and native industries.

We have seen that in the distribution of *efakó* income a certain contribution goes to the head of the guild section. This, then, is a first instance of economic co-operation of the large professional unit. This co-operation is visible also in another, external, feature of this professional organization. In each of the three day-markets of Bida there is a special barbers' 'hall', a spacious open hut, where all the barbers (specially the family heads) meet in the afternoon, and sit and wait for clients and summons. This hut is built and kept up from a common fund. The existence of this common fund is itself evidence of a close co-operation in the financial field. Into this fund, which is called *dashí*, every barber

[1] The barbers are usually paid in money; but when the Bida barbers tour the country-villages they often take firewood or food in lieu of payment.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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456 can normally exercise. Such are wars, slave-raids, political abuses which might deprive a group of the fruits of its labour, the loss of a member of the working group through imprisonment, or—to-day—unexpected fluctuations in the market for export commodities. The insurance which the Nupe productive system can provide against risks of this kind is, of necessity, limited in scope and efficiency. I have spoken already of certain forms which this insurance took in the traditional society: clientship and political allegiance. More interesting to us here are risks which are inherent in the productive organization itself, and which represent 'normal' risks in the sense that experience shows them to be ever present. Into this category come risks due, for example, to a failure of the crop, to marketing difficulties, a temporary economic stringency, or a temporary deficiency in the labour organization owing to illness or old age of individual members of the labour-unit. With risks of this kind the Nupe productive system is well equipped to deal, either through its normal labour organization or through certain mechanisms specially devised to provide 'insurance'.

456 592 The 'normal' risks in agriculture are insured against by means of the very constitution of the *efakŏ*, the co-operative labour-unit. A large co-operative group is capable of utilizing fully the highly diversified agricultural technique of the country, and of spreading cultivation, both locally and with regard to the crops grown, so as to eliminate the risk of a total failure. In a large working-unit it is also comparatively easy to make up for the temporary elimination of a worker. In a group of this kind invalid or aged group members can be assigned lighter work, or can even be supported by the rest of the group without doing any work. The smaller the group the more difficult it becomes to distribute tasks in this fashion, to spare a worker, and feed an 'extra mouth'. In the small, two-men or one-man labour-unit, the retirement of a member means the end of the working group, and his support places a heavy strain on the remaining organization. A new *ad hoc* arrangement may become necessary, in which independent small labour-units have to combine to maintain the retired member. Here is an instance which I noted in a *tunga* near Bida: a family of five was divided in two labour-units, one consisting of two adults, and the other of an old man, their father, who worked together with his two young grandsons. As his labour-unit could not produce enough for food and tax, the sons contributed ten bundles of grain a year towards the cost of their father's household.[1] That a situation of this kind may, in an extreme case, lead to a complete break-down of the 'insurance' scheme could be seen from household budget C quoted above,[2] which showed an old man and an invalid still depending on their own greatly reduced working capacity. Another example is that of a farmer who had hurt his arm and, having been disabled for one year, became a temporary labourer the following year to make up for the losses he had sustained.

456 467 The group co-operation in the guild-organized crafts similarly provides insurance against 'normal' risks. The guild organization, as we

[1] An analogous example from a family of craftsmen was quoted above, in household budget E.

[2] [See p. 341, cat. 116 – Analyst.]

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sentiments in co-operation was also implied in various statements made earlier in the discussion of economics. We have seen that the craft-guilds plan their labour organization on kinship lines, and reinforce the labour group by what we have called 'professional endogamy'. But let us realize that in doing this they do not appeal to abstract kinship ties or 'bonds of blood', but merely duplicate the common labour interests by corresponding family interests, namely, the concrete interests and forms of social interdependence entailed in intermarriage. Another instance of the influence of kinship ties became apparent in the fact that to-day sons would still agree to stay in the *efakó*, while brother's sons decline to do so. Yet we have also seen that even sons desire under certain conditions to be released from the *efakó*-unit. In the case of individual crafts and trade, kinship obligations, even of sons to fathers, are no longer recognized. The dissolution of the large labour-unit, moreover, has made it abundantly clear that its size and coherence is determined predominantly by economic interests and relations. Kinship bonds and sentiments are not strong enough to maintain a labour group once its economic usefulness is impaired. Generally speaking, then, kinship bonds, in order to supply a substratum for productive co-operation, must have the support of economic incentives—material benefits and forms of compensation. Where the latter fail, the kinship bonds themselves will fail in this task.

Though we cannot thus admit the effectiveness of kinship factors as such (at least not in a decisive measure) upon the labour organization, the reverse is no doubt true. The labour organization exercises a two-fold influence upon the structure of the family and kinship group: (1) through contributing to the co-operative mechanisms within the kinship group, and (2) through accepting the responsibility for certain tasks which are vital to the continuity and stability of the kinship group.

(1) The integration of the kinship group, that is, the 'internal adaptation' of the social unit (Radcliffe-Brown), is largely determined by the scope and closeness of contacts and forms of co-operation existing in the group. Co-operation in the same labour-unit thus represents one of the most important integrative factors in this sense. We remember also that the labour-unit coincides with the household-unit, and that the individuals who agree to work together also 'keep house', eat, and live together. The constant contacts and the lasting mutual adjustment entailed in this productive arrangement build up strongly coherent units. The reduction in size, and the splitting-up into small individual units, of the large labour-unit, must detract essentially from the integration of the family group.

(2) Speaking generally, the large labour group, led by old and experienced men, is more far-sighted in its economic planning than the small one-man or two-men unit. It allows for certain group interests which the individual worker will ignore, or discount as of lesser importance; it can assess necessities and wants more objectively, with a view to the fundamental needs of the group rather than immediate individual satisfaction. Thus the family head will place foremost the necessity of finding the bride-price for the junior family members in order to

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602 592 182 establish them socially as full members of the community, i.e. as married men, and, indirectly, to assure the continuity of the family group. We have seen that even if the family head is unable to produce the necessary amount himself, and the young men have themselves to contribute, the family head would keep and save the money for them. The young men, left to themselves, are tempted to squander money on things which appear to them to be of greater urgency, and to disregard, to their own detriment as well as to the detriment of the group, the more distant necessity of marriage. As in the case of the Bida labourers, their money 'goes at once', and they remain unmarried even a considerable time after having reached marriageable age. In the extreme case a family head would even pawn the labour and liberty of a younger family member who is less essential to the group for the sake of keeping in freedom the elder, more important family member, or enabling him to found a family. We can go even farther than this. Older men, tending to uphold tradition, will plan labour and expenditure so that there should be money, food, as well as time available for family feasts or communal religious ceremonies. Their efforts thus serve (unconsciously) the interests of group integration at large, which the younger generation, not so fully steeped in traditional ways of thinking, may hesitate to put before more immediate attractions. Finally, by submitting to the authority of the older men in productive co-operation, the labour-unit also sustains their position of authority in a wider sense, as leaders of the community. We can say, then, that the large labour-unit is committed to the maintenance of the structure and the traditional values of the society, and that with its dissolution an important agency of social integration and continuity disappears.

796 602 182 The changes which the *gunnu* ritual has undergone recently are a convincing instance of this kind. In its traditional form the *gunnu* contained a certain most stirring scene which took place on the eve of the ritual, and which concerned the young men of the village especially. They were herded together in a certain place in the uninhabited bush, where they had to spend the night; they were to wait for a terrifying apparition, the spirit of the *ndakó gboyá*, who would question them about their moral conduct in the preceding year. If they were found guilty of having behaved disrespectfully towards their elders, they were flogged by their comrades at the command of the spirit. I have quoted already the article in which I described in detail the ritual and its effectiveness as a mechanism of social integration in the family group as well as the community.[1] But even from this short description we can gather the psychological importance of a ritual which uses such impressive stimuli to press home moral teaching, and to bind together periodically, in a common experience, the growing generation. Now, although the *gunnu* is still performed, the 'bush night' has been abandoned in many villages, and the explanation given was everywhere that the young men had refused to be subjected to the ordeal of this inquisition and punishment. The young men themselves were outspoken about the reasons of their refusal: 'We are now working as independently as the old men, we are paying tax for ourselves—why should we be flogged and threatened as if

[1] See pp. 25, 63.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND POLITICAL SYSTEM

602 Local and Kinship Grouping

611 Descent and succession to offices and the inheritance of rights to land and other property are normally patrilineal among all Nupe. At the same time kin ties traced through the mother may afford opportunities for advancement and, especially in Bida the capital, maternal connections with persons of rank may be used to advantage in the political sphere. The Nupe term *dengi* connotes kinship in the widest sense to include all recognized cognates, but the effective *dengi* of an individual consists mainly of his agnates or patrilineal relatives descended from a common ancestor several generations back. Maternal kin ties, on the other hand, are rarely traced or effective beyond one or two generations. Groups of male patrikin are significant both as the nuclei of residential groups in extended families and in the status system of the chiefdom.

596 The domestic unit is usually an elementary or polygynous family, i.e., a man,
592 his wife or wives, and unmarried children.[1] This, or a larger group consisting of a man, his wives, married sons, their wives and children, or of a set of brothers, their wives, children, and grandchildren, the nucleus of which is thus a patrilineage of small span, inhabits a division of the compound, keeps house and eats in common, and forms a single productive or labour unit. No special name exists for this group apart from that referring to its organization as a labour unit or *efakó*. The larger unit was formerly general, but under modern conditions the family has tended to divide when sons become adult. The domestic family normally forms part of a larger social unit, the "house" (*emi*), which is both a kinship and a territorial group and may also be referred to as a *katamba*, a term for the common gateway or entrance to an enclosed compound. An *emi* may be localized in one compound or may be distributed over a number of adjacent compounds, occupying either the whole or part of a ward (*efu*). In Bida the *emi* tends to be more widely scattered. The nucleus of an *emi* again consists of a body of patrikin to which wives and others are attached. Its head is known as the *emitsó* ("owner of the house"), a position which falls to the senior male member of the group, who is succeeded by the next in seniority of the same generation, and so on. When a section of an *emi* separates physically it continues to recognize its former head while he lives, but on his death it often attains an independent position with its own head. The size of the *emi* varies considerably. In Bida, those of commoners are often small and may contain no more than six or eight individuals; in the smaller settlements and among the nobility they may include as many as 60 persons.

602 Beyond these groups the Nupe also often recognize kinship over a still wider field. Thus a whole village may be regarded as descended from one ancestor, but such essentially mythical kinship links do not involve any specific kinship claims and obligations.

565 The three royal houses of Nupe may be regarded as large lineages or "clans,[2]"
614 for they claim to observe rigid patrilineal descent believed to have proceeded from sanctified "first ancestors."

Forms of Settlement: House Types[3]

361 Nupe live in compact villages or towns (*ezi* is the term for both) which vary considerably in size; in Bida Emirate, besides the capital, there are three considerable settlements: Doko (800), Mokwa (2,000), Kutigi (3,000). Some, on the other

[1] Nadel, 1942, pp. 28–33.
[2] Nadel, 1942, pp. 24, 27–32, 34, 36– , 236–7; 1938; Temple, 1919, p. 234; Malam Aliyu Bida, notes, ed. Harris.

3: Forde E-4 (no date) 1955 FF52 Nupe FF52

hand, are hardly larger than a *tunga* (see below). An *ezi* used to be encircled by a large wall, the ruins of which can still be seen in many places, which formed a protection from the dangers of war. Some Nupe villages of to-day have sprung from the amalgamation of smaller groups, fusing for purposes of protection against Fulani raiders.

To-day there is at least one small mosque in every Nupe settlement except in the riverain villages, while pagan shrines are concealed in the houses. All settlements have good wells and round roasting-ovens of red clay. A square of open booths forms the market. To the west of every village is an open space (*finzo*) where corn is threshed.

An *ezi* usually has several *tunga* settlements or hamlets; Kutigi, for example, has six, founded between 1860 and 1910. The *tunga* are much smaller "daughter settlements" or "colonies" of the *ezi*. They seldom consist of more than three family groups (*emi*—see p. 31 above); they are less permanent than the "real" village, and lack the religious and ancestral bonds which tie a village to its locality. They have no separate markets or age-sets. *Tunga* settlements have been formed by groups moving out into the bush in search of new farmland; they are always referred to as the *tunga* of a certain *ezi* and rarely, if ever, develop into villages themselves. Close contact, intermarriage, and new emigration link a *tunga* with its *ezi*.

The ward (*efu*) is a sector of a large village or town and is made up of a number of compounds; except in some riverside villages they are often separated from each other by stretches of open land or cultivated fields studded with clumps of trees. Each *efu* has its own name, derived from a topographical peculiarity or a sociological feature, or from the origin of the inhabitants. The number of *efu* in an *ezi* varies; the old city of Bida had four, Doko has five.

The walled compound or "house" (*emi*), already mentioned with reference to its occupants, consists of a number of huts, mostly round, with very thin walls of clay and grass-thatched roofs. The high mud wall surrounding the *emi* opens upon a path or open space where there is a gateway or entrance hall to the compound, consisting of a larger hut known as *katamba*. The *katamba* is used as a meeting place for the men, as a guest house for strangers, or for the carrying out of part-time industries such as mat- or net-making. Within the *emi* are smaller partitions and a number of smaller *katamba* invisible from the outside. A chief sometimes has a larger and more imposing *katamba* with a high gabled roof and windows. Huts and entrance hall are often decorated with ornaments worked in relief into the clay. Signs of occupational specialization, such as a blacksmith's furnace, are sometimes found. A man and each of his wives has a separate hut.

Granaries (*edo*) which stand among the living-huts in the compound, are egg-shaped, raised off the ground, about 7 ft. high and 4 ft. in diameter, with thick clay walls and a grass roof. The opening is about halfway up one side and has a clay lid. There are also cylindrical ovens, 5 ft. high and 3 ft. wide, for drying bulrush millet and shea-nuts, and for making soap, outside the compound. These are communal property, owned by the women.

The Political System[3]

The political organization of the Nupe is centralized under the *Etsu* Nupe, who is the highest title-holder in a nobility graded by precedence but within which there is provision for promotion. Little is known of the system of kingship in pre-Fulani times, though some features from the ancient Nupe system doubtless survive in the original Nupe dynasty at Patigi. In former times there were ritual taboos in conformity with which the *Etsu* wore only white, ate food prepared only by his wives, and might not be seen eating by any stranger. The *ndakó gboyá* cult[4] for

[3] Nadel, 1942, pp. 87–91.
[4] See below, pp. 48–9.